Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Castro Attends Reception for Brazilian Governor

FL171500 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, president of the Councils of State and Ministers, has attended a reception in honor of Sao Paulo's governor. The reception was held at the Brazilian Embassy and hosted by Brazilian Ambassador Italo Zappa.

The commander in chief held a lively conversation with the distinguished visitor and inquired about the details of his stay, especially his experiences during the recent visit to the Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. The governor of Sao Paulo said he was very impressed with the center.

Chats With Journalists

FL172339 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Our commander in chief, Fidel Castro, attended a reception last night hosted by the Brazilian ambassador to Cuba in honor of Sao Paulo Governor Orestes Quercia. Upon leaving the Embassy, the commander in chief was approached by Brazilian reporters who asked him for a message for their country, as well as an evaluation of the meetings he has held with the Sao Paulo governor.

[Begin recording] [Castro] I wish for the Brazilians all that I wish for Cuba. I express my wishes with the same feeling I express them for my own people, because of that sense of fraternity and friendship we have with the Brazilians, and because we are very similar. We are Caribbean and you are South Americans. Few countries in Latin America have so much in common in their character. Traits, happy spirit, music, and everything else the Brazilians and Cubans shared.

[Reporter] Both good and bad.

[Castro, chuckling] Both good and bad. As the saying goes: Everything happens for a reason. So we must turn our defects into virtues.

[Reporter] You have seen the governor five times.

[Castro] You think I have a preference for Sao Paulo's governor, but that is not the case. I have great appreciation for the governor, and for the work he is doing over there. But I want you to know, as I see you keep track of each time a high level delegation comes here from Brazil, that I spend a lot of time with all of them. I hope no one feels ignored.

However, I can say I have enjoyed the meetings with the governor very much. We have taken advantage of the time, we have found many interesting things to talk about, especially our experiences. I told you about that yesterday.

We have also spoken about something on which we agree quite a bit; that is the decentralization concept. The concept of greater participation at the municipal level. He spoke to me about something I believe in firmly and on which we agree completely. Because it is exactly what we have done in our country—to bring the authorities and the people together. He briefed me on the efforts he has made; for example, in health services. He briefed me on his agreements with the central government and the cities so the cities can handle health services.

This draws the people closer to the authorities who can make the decisions and solve the problems. We have applied that principle in our country with great results. Therefore, all these subjects have been the object of analysis. That is why all these exchanges on information and opinions with the governor have been very interesting to me. Furthermore, I said yesterday that Sao Paulo has a population three times larger than Cuba's and is five times larger. And of course, it has a much greater economic production than ours. [end recording]

Haiti

Four Parties Plan To Replace Current CNG

FL171855 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] The National Concerted Action Front [FNC], the Movement for the Implementation of Democracy in Haiti [MIDH], the Haitian Christian Democratic Party [PDCH], and the National Agricultural and Industrial Party [PAIN], have issued a joint statement.

The four Haitian presidential candidates in the 29 November 1987 elections, acting in their capacity as leaders of the four parties and groups which represent an overwhelming majority of the electorate for those elections; and meeting as a committee of democratic agreement in order to come up with a solution to the crisis in Haiti triggered by the anticonstitutional behavior of the current members of the National Government Council [CNG] declare—and I quote:

1. That the 29 November CNG decree professing to dismiss the nine members of the Provisional Electoral Council [CEP] violates the Constitution of 29 March 1987 and constitutes a new CNG attempt at a coup d'etat against the people's sovereignty.

2. That the decision made Wednesday 9 December 1987 to publish a calendar of political activities giving the date on which the electoral law is to be published constitutes

new proof of the CNG's desire to take over the organization of the elections, which goes against both the spirit and the letter of the Constitution.

3. That only a body completely independent of the executive branch—as the Constitution specifies—can offer the guarantee of the free, honest, and democratic elections to which the nation aspires, as evidenced by, among other things, the great number of people who registered to vote and their obvious determination to do so, even while under attack from murderous bullets on that black Sunday of 29 November.

4. That the systematic refusal of the current members of the CNG to give the CEP a state organization, the means necessary for it to function—as well as to provide security for voters on election day—is one of the main reasons the CEP decided to stop the elections.

5. That all the acts of banditry which took place during November, including the massacre of voters at the polls, were carried out by macoute assassins supported by a macoute sector of the Army. The CNG has, to this day, made no attempt to arrest the persons responsible for all these crimes, despite the fact their identity is common knowledge.

6. That the promises made by the minister of interior and the other members of the CNG regarding guarantees of security for the elections—see communique of 25 November 1987, interview granted to AFP on Thursday 26 November 1987, and another communique of Friday 27 November 1987—led people to believe, wrongly, that the Army would ensure the protection of voters, whereas in reality everything happened as if the population was being subjected to a veritable ambush.

7. That the recruiting of former militiamen [VSN or "Ton-Tons Macoutes"] and macoute assassins into key units of the Armed Forces by certain members of the Armed Forces is a flagrant betrayal of the promises made by Generals Namphy and Regala on 7 February 1986, and is of such a nature as to sully the honor of our entire military institution

(?8) That to divert attention and make public opinion forget about the perpetrators of the massacres of 29 November—(?who) have been neither arrested nor brought to trial—the CNG is holding over the head of the Haitian nation the spectre of a foreign intervention against which no serious measures have as yet been taken: neither to protect the civilian population, nor to take any kind of diplomatic or military action. In fact, Haitians are even being molested in the Dominican Republic, while the government in Haiti lets this happen, even permitting foreign military planes to land on the sacred soil of the fatherland without reacting in the slightest.

9. That the taking hostage of the judicial branch of the government by the provisional executive branch; the obstacles of all kinds placed in the path of the judiciary as it sought to pursue its mission, a mission which is nevertheless essential to the functioning of any society; the disinformation and slander campaign systematically orchestrated against our churches; and the attempts to render the press servile, particularly RTNH [Radio Tele-Diffusion Nationale d'Haiti, the national radio and television stations], are contrary to the free exercise of civil rights and go against the Constitution;

(?10.) That it is becoming increasingly clear the decree dismissing the CEP and the alleged irregularities for which the CEP is held responsible are nothing more than maneuvers by the CNG aimed at enabling it either to hold on to power itself or to pass power to a macoute Duvalierist interested only in perpetrating abuses and maintaining the privileges of the past.

11. That, under these circumstances and considering the broken promises of 29 November, it is very difficult for us to continue to trust the CNG to ensure the security of the citizenry and guarantee free elections.

Consequently, we of the FNC, the MIDH, the PDCH, and the PAIN, coming together in a committee of national agreement, completely free of any considerations having to do with being elected to office, and acting out of patriotism alone, reaffirm and declare before the nation, national institutions, the judiciary, the Army, sister nations, countries that are friends of the Haitian people, and international institutions, that we no longer attribute to the members of the current CNG sufficient moral and political authority to effectively defend the fatherland, organize elections, or guarantee security for elections. We ask the CNG to resign to allow the country to make a new start along the road to democracy and progress, within the framework of a state of law.

Consequently, we have reached an agreement on a formula for a civilian-military government to replace the CNG. This government would be a five-member CNG, thus respecting the form set forth in the Constitution. This CNG will be composed of prominent figures struggling for democracy who are known for their spirit of independence, professional competence, and experience.

This CNG will have a dual task. First, to form, in conformity with the spirit and the letter of Article 289 of the Constitution of March 1987, a CEP charged with resuming the electoral proceedings in line with the democratic aspirations expressed by the Haitian people. A second task of the new CNG will be to ensure the dispatch of the state's current business until a freely-elected president is sworn in.

In carrying out the part of its mandate dealing with the dispatch of the state's current business, the new CNG will be aided by a ministerial cabinet. This cabinet will

be composed of, among others, duly designated representatives of those organizations which, in conformity with the Constitution of 1987, formed the CEP of April and May 1987. [sentence as heard]

We have begun discussions with these organizations on the principle of their participating in the formula for replacing the current CNG set forth above and we are pleased to announce the reactions encountered up to now are very encouraging. Needless to say, the four parties are determined to give full support to this new CNG and to the ministerial cabinet so we can arrive at, under the reconstituted CEP, free elections in keeping with the Constitution and with the desire of the Haitian people.

Furthermore, we make the commitment, before the Haitian people, to manage the country together, within the framework of a government of national unity, regardless of the outcome of the elections, in order to respond under the best conditions to the hopes of the population, which is demanding change.

That is, thus, a joint statement (?signed) by Marc L. Bazin, for the MIDH; Gerard Gourgue, for the FNC; Reverend Sylvio C. Claude, for the PDCH; and Louis Dejoie II, for the PAIN.

CNG Decrees New CEP Decisions Appealable

FL172237 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Unlike the decisions of the former Provisional Electoral Council [CEP] in connection with Article 291 regarding the candidacy of former Duvalierists to elected office, which could not be appealed, the decisions of the new CEP may henceforth be appealed before the Court of Cassation.

A National Government Council [CNG] decree dated 14 December modifies the decree of 3 July 1987 setting forth the terms and conditions under which the CEP is to function.

Under the terms of Article Four of the new decree, it will be the duty of the CEP to draw up the electoral decree and submit it to the CNG within 5 full days from the swearing-in of the CEP members. The CEP will also have to make all information, reports, or documents in connection with the electoral proceedings accessible to the public in general, and to the candidates in particular; make sure that declarations of candidacy are in conformity with the Constitution and with the law; notify the parties concerned of the CEP's decision within 8 full days from the time the declarations of candidacy are received; supervise the unfolding of the electoral proceedings; ensure respect for the dispositions of the Constitution and the law as regards the coming elections; and proclaim the results of the elections. The CEP must also execute the electoral decree.

The CEP has four central departments: a department in charge of electoral proceedings, a legal department, a department in charge of training and motivation, and an administrative department.

At the regional level, the CEP retains the Departmental Electoral Offices and the Communal Electoral Offices, the composition and duties of which are set forth in the text of the decree.

Sylvio Claude Calls for Action Against CNG

FL172218 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Reverend Sylvio Claude, president of the PDCH [Haitian Christian Democratic Party] held a news conference this morning during which he called on the people to mobilize to force the National Government Council to leave power.

Claude also denounced a plot being hatched within the Army against him. No one will be able to eliminate me, said Pastor Sylvio Claude, who declared: God is with me.

Client of Late Yves Volel Released 16 Dec

FL172248 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil in Creole 1200 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Jean Raymond Louis, a 29-year-old Haitian arrested on 10 September by armed civilians in Port-au-Prince, was released yesterday after being held at the Criminal Investigations Department for 3 months, without ever having been taken to court.

His lawyer was Yves Volel, the presidential candidate who was murdered in front of police headquarters on 13 October when he appeared at the headquarters to try to obtain the release of Jean Raymond Louis. Volel died with a copy of the Constitution in his hand.

After Louis was arrested, he was taken to the Criminal Investigations Department at the general police headquarters, where they accused him of manufacturing Molotov cocktails as a member of a small political group he had organized in the Dominican Republic. The name of the political group is National Progressive Forces of Haiti Jean Raymond Louis said yesterday.

He also said he was mistreated and beaten repeatedly while he was in custody at the Criminal Investigations Department. He explained on the day Volel died, he was put into a dungeon for a week, without either food or water. Louis added that on 16 November, he was moved to the national penitentiary, where conditions are better.

Government Newspaper To Resume Operations

FL172304 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1400 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] The general administration of HAITI LIBEREE [government newspaper] informs its readers, the general public, and its employees in particular, the newspaper, which has been closed for reorganization since 17 June 1987, is going to resume operations. However, a date for the resumption of publication has not yet been set.

HAITI LIBEREE asks all the professionals who were working with the paper to contact its administrative department as soon as possible, so their work contracts can be renewed. The general administration thanks everyone who was in one way or another involved in the reappearance of the paper.

The press release from HAITI LIBEREE is dated 15 December 1987.

Honduras

Government Receives Initial F-5 Delivery

PA172342 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1130 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Honduras has received the first 2 of 12 F-5 fighter planes donated by the United States to the Honduran Air Force with the alleged intention of maintaining the Honduran Air Force's superiority in Central America. The planes were received at the Hector Caracciori Air Base in La Ceiba yesterday. The planes, which were coming from a U.S. base, landed under strict security measures at 0515. The planes were received by General Humberto Regalado Hernandez, Armed Forces commander in chief, and other high-ranking officers.

During their flight to Honduras, the F-5 planes were accompanied by a civilian plane carrying representatives of the U.S. Northrop Corporation, which builds the F-5. The representatives delivered the planes on behalf of the U.S. Government at an official ceremony attended only by Armed Forces personnel.

Air Force Colonel Hector Castro Cabuz, Hector Caracciori Air Base commander, flew one of the planes, while the other was reportedly flown by a U.S. pilot.

In addition to barring newsmen from the delivery ceremony, soldiers threatened to destroy their film if they took pictures, even if they did so from a distance.

The delivery of the F-5 squadron, whose cost is estimated at 150 million lempiras, will be completed in April 1988. The Honduran Government will pay for them with part of the U.S. military aid granted to Honduras every year.

The delivery of the F-5 gives Honduras the most modern fighter plane in Central America and will maintain the superiority the Honduran Air Force has had in the region for several years.

Nicaragua

Government Report on National Dialogue

PA171508 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 16 Dec 87 p 5

[Text] Commander Carlos Nunez has said that "the Nicaraguan Government is awaiting a reply or a partial reply from the opposition regarding alternatives to possible constitutional amendments. Yesterday, these options were presented to the parties participating in the National Dialogue.

Nunez, the government's National Dialogue representative, made a political assessment of yesterday's brief session. After presenting the government's proposal to take the list of amendments to the National Assembly, the opposition bloc walked out of the meeting alleging that their demands had been rejected.

The meeting began when Commander Nunez read the official reply to the "17-point" amendments to the Constitution. In an 11-page report, the Presidency summarized the 70-day duration of the National Dialogue. It criticized the political groups' "sudden impatience" and held the parties responsible for a possible break in the political dialogue process.

The official document raised this question: Why was time not previously taken into consideration? The first three sessions of the National Dialogue were used up discussing those who would participate in it. Later on, it took four more sessions to approve the rules for the dialogue, and this took 1 month. Finally, it took 12 days to approve the agenda.

The document stressed the government's obligation to make every effort to make the dialogue succeed. It warned opposition groups, however, that "if they decide to withdraw from the dialogue, it will be up to them, and—as on other occasions—the dialogue would be broken off because some opposition parties withdraw whenever their demands, regardless of how whimsical they are, are rejected."

The document mentioned that the National Dialogue was installed to contribute to the Central American peace efforts and that, "nevertheless, most political parties have viewed the National Dialogue as a platform from which to demand a representation that the people in fact did not give them, because these parties chose to abstain from the electoral process." They are also using the National Dialogue as "an instrument through which to accuse the government of noncompliance" with the Esquipulas II agreement.

"We have recently observed that the masks on stage are beginning to fall off as participant groups are appearing and shamelessly confessing their plans to become the counterrevolution's political wing. These groups receive a timid response from groups that call themselves patriotic," the document added.

After urging the political parties to set aside their pressure and blackmail and to place the interests of the fatherland first, the government report offered two alternatives to the opposition. According to the first one, it would be up to the 96 National Assembly deputies to decide on the list of amendments. This duty does not fall within the government's purview, especially since 12 of the 17 "amendments" involve constitutional matters and the rest involve common laws.

The second alternative offered is that the political parties represented in the National Assembly introduce the proposed amendments for discussion. This is established

under the Constitution. The government also proposed that 8 of the 17 points be discussed at the National Dialogue because they involve common laws.

The report notes that any one of the government proposals states that discussion of the agenda's next point should continue. Furthermore, proposals regarding the electoral and judicial powers and the Constitutional Guarantees Tribunal were acceptable because the electoral and amparo laws are still to be made and approved.

The official document concludes that the government firmly rejects the political parties' ultimatum because "it is an ineffective way to arrive at a consensus or an agreement." The document reaffirms a desire to continue dialogue on this subject and on the rest of the agenda's points.

When Commander Nunez finished reading the official document, however, opposition spokesman Luis Sanchez read a brief communique issued by the 14 political groups requesting "the immediate forwarding of the proposed reforms to the National Assembly for approval before the end of the present legislative period," which is 6 days from now. The opposition report predicted an official "rejection" of the opposition's proposals, surprising the government delegation, which had just given alternatives to the debate.

Immediately afterward, the right-wing document threatened that if the 17 reforms were not approved before 21 December, the National Dialogue would end and they would consider "that the government has broken it off and that it has not complied with the Esquipulas II agreements." To back their words with actions, the politicians got up from their seats and angrily left the session.

When Carlos Nunez reported the events to newsmen, he recalled that it was not the government's obligation, according to the Guatemala agreement, to approve constitutional reforms, but that, nevertheless, the possibility of these reforms had been discussed in the past weeks. He also recalled that Nicaragua is the only country in Central America that is carrying out the National Dialogue, and that this fact has not been predicated on simultaneous, similar actions in the rest of the region.

Nunez stated to reporters: "We have been flexible; we hoped to reach agreements on political and democratization aspects. You can best determine who has made a greater effort for dialogue up to now—whether it has been the opposition or the government."

He added that he could convoke all those political parties that were willing to continue discussions and express their opinions on the government's proposals. He said: "I do not know why they are afraid of this proposal," noting that the opposition takes this position because it either "had a lapse of memory or is ignorant." He noted that the government "will not change its position before 21 December," because "it does not have alternatives other than the ones presented in this document." He hoped that some if not all of the parties would reconsider and continue to participate in the National Dialogue.

Reviewing the parties' stand, including the parties represented in parliament, Nunez noted that "the opposition was unable to assume a firm attitude and this attitude has facilitated the participation in the National Dialogue of groups that have already defined themselves at the contras' political wing." He reaffirmed, however, the government's willingness to continue dialogue with all the groups willing to do so.

In the afternoon, all the opposition members held a news conference and insisted on their position. They stated that the continuation of the dialogue depends on the government. Without any spectacular statements, the politicians Jaime Bonilla from the Independent Liberal Party, Alejandro Perez Arevalo from the Central American Unionist Party, Luis Sanchez from the Nicaraguan Socialist Party, and Erick Ramirez from the Social Christian Party stated that they want to continue the dialogue, but would not do so if the government did not meet their demands.

Radio Catolica on Esquipulas 'Miracles'
PA171850 Managua Radio Catolica in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Dec 87

[Commentary by Cesar Vivas Rojas, director of the "The Church" newscast]

[Text] Good evening. Esquipulas has finally produced some miracles: There is at present the opportunity for freedom of expression which, although incomplete because of the current state of emergency, does exist. Some prisoners have been released, although not all of them have been given their freedom, as stipulated in the letter and spirit of the Esquipulas agreements.

Another miracle produced by Esquipulas has been the unity of important opposition parties and groups into one bloc, which has upset the Sandinists, who are now confronting leftist, centrist, and rightist parties, that is, an ideological, conglomeration which has left Sandinism in painful loneliness.

This situation has apparently disturbed the Sandinist leaders to such a degree that—after having unexpectedly interrupted the dialogue with the FDN in the Dominican Republic with a decision that caught His Eminence Cardinal Obando y Bravo, the Nicaraguan people, and the people of the world by surprise—the Sandinists decided to renew the dialogue, again in the Dominican Republic, on Monday, but this time with an incredible novelty. The novelty is that the Sandinist delegation will have foreign advisers in the same way that they have an

internationalist advisory system that functions under the inspiration of advisers from various countries that have exotic ideologies that are very foreign to our way of doing things.

When asked who the advisers would be, the FSLN said: They will be Nicaraguans who speak like Nicaraguans. Undoubtedly, the Sandinist decision to go to the Dominican Republic with people who speak a language different from our own has been a mistake that they possibly do not see because of their habit of dealing with internationalists. This is another example that gives credence to the saying that man is a creature of habit. Thank you for your attention.

Panama

Delvalle Discusses Pardon, Libyan Ties

PA172030 Panama City Radio Exitosa in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Report by Doris Hubbard Castillo on interview with President Eric Arturo Delvalle following decoration ceremony for Panama Defense Forces members at Panama Defense Forces headquarters in Panama City on 15 December]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Begin recording] [Delvalle] The media may be reopened after the end of the year, following the end of the Legislative Assembly session. I am going to give the Legislative Assembly the opportunity to pass a bill approving modifications that some agree with and some do not.

We do not want to do any gagging. What we want is a sense of responsibility. I am going to say this again: We just want people who make statements to be responsible for what they say so people will feel protected in this country, so no one can easily insult other people.

Courts are loaded with cases involving this situation. I have mentioned this because it is something that is really happening. If by the end of the year nothing has happened, then the pardon decree goes into effect and the media can reopen.

There are, of course, legal procedures that must be followed. They [the media] have to go to court; a justice has to preside over procedures that last a few days. I do not know the exact details.

[Reporter] The precondition for the reopening is approval of that bill?

[Delvalle] No. The bill may be approved and the reopening may be approved. The law [on the media] does not open the media. The pardon will open the media.

[Reporter] Does this also apply to Colonel Diaz Herrera?

[Delvalle] I have said that the Diaz Herrera case is a different matter, because I am talking about people who have been accused and not about persons who are under arrest or who are confessed criminals. This is out of my jurisdiction; this a matter handled by the judicial branch. However, I know that some procedures are ongoing and that there could be a ruling on this. But I do not know about this.

What I am doing will benefit those who have been charged and who are either outside the country—the majority—or inside the country in hiding, so they feel free to enjoy all the individual rights they want and that we all want. We all want peace in Panama. This is what we are trying to secure.

[Reporter] There is speculation about changes in your cabinet. Will there be changes or not?

[Delvalle] There will be changes, in due time. [end recording]

Regarding relations with Libya, Delvalle said:

[Begin recording] At this time, when the United States has stopped all aid, Panama has been examining the possibility of validating an agreement that General Torrijos signed with Libya several years ago that could offer us the chance to secure some money so that the government may continue with scheduled development projects that have been suspended. Summertime—a time for initiating many projects because of the dry season—is coming, and right now we do not have the money to carry them out. [end recording]

Another important announcement made by Delvalle was one dealing with the appointment of Supreme Court justices and an Electoral Tribunal official to be chosen from opposition parties. [passage omitted]

Abadia on U.S., Libyan, Soviet Relations

PA180339 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1730 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Report by Rigoberto Dimas Castillerot]

[Text] There is much speculation and there have been many reports saying that Panama is starting negotiations to establish diplomatic, commercial, and other relations with Libya. What we are doing is reactivating the agreements signed by General Omar Torrijos as head of state, Foreign Minister Jorge Abadia said:

[Begin recording, in progress]...not at all. There is much speculation that we have started negotiations to establish diplomatic, commercial, and all sort of relations [with Libya]. We are reactivating the agreements signed by Gen Omar Torrijos as head of state.

We are studying various alternatives—now that we are suffering this financial shortage—because friendly nations have suspended their aid to Panama. We cannot be so irresponsible as to let our people die. We cannot continue without hospitals, roads, or schools. We must get the resources we need. This does not mean we are going to sell out our country. That will never happen. We will never compromise our people's security or peace for any reason. Nevertheless, we have to see where can we get some aid. If it [Libya] has offered aid—which many other countries such as the UK, Italy, Israel, and others have been offering and have granted—then we have an obligation to our people. We will thus review the agreements to find out if such agreements can go into effect for the benefit of our people, without sacrificing anything. This is all we have been doing. Everything else is just speculation. [end recording]

Asked about his opinion on reports by some U.S. media alleging Panama could establish relations with the USSR and whether this step would damage relations with the United States, which Panama is trying to improve, Minister Abadia said:

[Begin recording] The United States is hurt because we have agreed to allow Aeroflot flights to Panama. Everybody knows Omar Torrijos airport is not being used to its full capacity. We have to find more work for the airport employees. We have to accept this airline, which wants to land at our airport for special missions of a commercial nature. To speak about establishing diplomatic relations with the USSR, however, is irresponsible speculation. This is not being studied at this time. [end recording]

Foreign Minister Abadia added that Panama and the United States are holding negotiations to improve relations:

[Begin recording] We believe Panama and the United States are taking the necessary steps to improve relations. We are truly interested in improving relations. We believe the United States also wants to improve relations. There has been some rapprochement, and we hope this will be intensified so our relations with the United States will return to normal. [end recording]

World Bank To Finance Public Works

PA171711 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 17 Dec 87 p 1

[Text] The World Bank will reactivate financial plans involving 110 million balboas for hydroelectric, aqueduct, sewage systems; road repair programs; and port works in Panama.

This positive decision by the World Bank was announced at noon yesterday during a luncheon hosted by President Eric Arturo Delvalle in honor of Mr Rainer B. Steckhan, director of the World Bank's Central America, Mexico, and Caribbean Department.

Mr Steckhan was accompanied by Mr Ricardo Halperin, head of the World Bank's Infrastructure Operations and Energy Division; and Mr Robert Lasslet, the World Bank's official in charge of the Panama office.

The reactivation of these finance programs by the World Bank will directly benefit programs such as the Fortuna Dam, the second port project, the road repair program, and others programs involving aqueduct and sewage systems.

During the luncheon for the World Bank officials, President Delvalle was accompanied by Ministers Hector Alexander, Jose Bernardo Cardenas, and Ricaurte Vasquez.

Briefs

Supreme Court Justice Appointed

During the 16 December Cabinet meeting presided over by President Eric Arturo Delvalle, it was decided to appoint Campo Elias Munoz and Kjell Harmodio Arosemena as Supreme Court justices to replace Alvaro Cedeno and Camilo O. Perez, respectively. The appointments were officially announced in Resolution 154. [Summary] *[Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 17 Dec 87 pp 1A, 18A PA]*

Argentina

Alfonsin Returns From Visit to Italy

PY161143 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1123 GMT 16 Dec 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 16 Dec (TELAM)—President Raul Alfonsin arrived in Buenos Aires from Milan at 0810 on board Argentine Air Force plane TC-95.

Following his arrival at Ezeiza International Airport, the president, who was applauded by the journalists and people who were in the airport's hall, held an informal news conference.

Aldo Rico Case Turned Over to Military Court

PY181138 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 0110 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 17 Dec (NA)—BY a 3-to-2 vote, the Supreme Court has ruled that the Military Court should hear the case of Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico, the leader of the Holy Week uprising. Thus, the Supreme Court resolved the issue of jurisdiction that had been raised between civilian and military courts.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Jose Caballero and justices Augusto Belluscio and Carlo Fayt cast votes approving the ruling by Attorney General Andres D'Alessio, while justices Enrique Petracchi and Jorge Bacque cast votes against. [passage omitted]

The justices who cast the majority vote expressed their view to the effect that Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico had, in principle, committed the crime of mutiny which is described in Article 683 of the Military Justice Code, since he rebelled against the Infantry School's director, Colonel Luis Pedrazzini, removing the latter from the command post.

Since the crime of mutiny is essentially a military offense (Article 108 of the Military Justice Code), the Supreme Court majority recognized the jurisdiction of the Military Court. In reaching this decision, the majority also took into account testimonies by UCR and Justicialist politicians who had talked with Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico, as well as the report that had been requested from President Raul Alfonsin.

Clearer Definition of Nuclear Policy Urged

PY171751 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1550 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 17 Dec (NA)—The Argentine Association of Nuclear Technology (AATN) has reported that the development of nuclear energy in the country "is seriously threatened by the lack of political definition" on the part of the national government.

The AATN, which is made up of scientists, professionals, and businessmen, has made an evaluation of the nuclear sector, indicating that the National Commission for Atomic Energy (CNEA) "is facing serious problems" in the construction of the Atucha II Nuclear Plant and the heavy water industrial plant of Arroyito.

In its evaluation the AATN said that "the CNEA is facing very serious problems concerning the contractors who are building two large projects included in the nuclear plan—the third nuclear plant, Atucha II, and the heavy water industrial plant."

The AATN also said that it does not understand why an energy project "of this magnitude depends exclusively on the depleted treasury," noting that "it does not have specific funds for financing."

The association also said that the CNEA "has problems" in receiving "just payment" for the electricity it provides and pointed out that in 1987 it received "20 percent less than in the previous year."

The AATN concluded by saying that "it is impossible to continue to provide technology and experimental reactors to other countries without having our own nuclear industry."

Brazil

Sarney Opens Brazilian Cooperation Agency

PY161417 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 0900 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] The government has opened an agency to ensure continuity in its foreign policy. During a ceremony at the Itamaraty Palace yesterday, President Jose Sarney opened the Brazilian Cooperation Agency [Agencia Brasileira de Cooperacao] which seeks further understanding with other countries. Former Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Peres was present at this ceremony in which Sarney recalled that his administration is committed to the policy of dialogue.

[Begin Sarney recording] We are a people that has never formed the habit of isolation. We are not seeking autocracy or hegemony. We participate in the international community with a spirit of participation, solidarity, and justice.

Although we are aware and proud of our individuality as a nation, we believe that we have much to learn and [word indistinct] from other peoples, and also to share some of our experiences.

This is the feeling of equality and equilibrium we seek for Brazilian relations with other countries, and the feeling we wish to grant to our international relations. In

order to attain this objective, we must strictly obey the principles of coexistence among nations, the peaceful solution of conflicts, mutual respect, tolerance, and nonintervention.

My government is committed to a policy of dialogue. Dialogue is the base of democracy and an essential instrument of consensus for any political project. In foreign policy, technical cooperation is the tool that helps to build an harmonious coexistence among the peoples who are willing to share the rewards of progress. [end recording]

The Brazilian Cooperation Agency is connected with the Alexandre Guzamao Federation of the Foreign Ministry.

Government Voices Concern on Mideast Tension
PY170120 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2100 GMT 16 Dec 87

[Text] Itamaraty has released a note stating that the Brazilian Government is concerned about the increase of tension between Israeli forces and Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank territories.

According to the note, Brazil has supported a peaceful, negotiated settlement of the Palestinian issue because it believes that violence will only radicalize the respective positions and thereby hinder the Middle East peace process. The note adds that the preservation of human rights and the observance of the principle of self-determination is an essential precondition for peaceful coexistence.

Peres Makes 'Private Visit' to Sao Paulo
PY180130 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2200 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres today returned to Brazil for a private visit. Peres arrived in Sao Paulo this afternoon.

His first engagement this afternoon was a meeting with Brazilian artists and intellectuals. Later, he visited the Sao Paulo Supply Center. Peres congratulated shop owners, and examined the quality of vegetables. He refused to discuss politics.

Businessmen Criticize Upcoming Fiscal Reform
PY161636 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 15 Dec 87 p 18

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] Sao Paulo—The following document is the complete statement issued by a group called the Informal Forum of Businessmen. This group was formed at the end of last year with the objective of discussing the main national issues. The group represents the industrial, commercial, agricultural, transportation, and financial sectors.

"The representatives of the Informal Forum of Businessmen, who gathered in Sao Paulo on 14 December, have unanimously decided to protest the new fiscal package proposed by the government, for the following reasons:

1. The government tax policy should be clear and open and must be discussed openly by society. Measures that will have a great impact on the economy must not be adopted at the end of the year merely to balance the government's accounts.

So far, society has not been informed how the funds that will be raised by the announced measures will be spent. It must be said that this harmful practice has constantly been used in this country. Year after year, measures that will have an economic impact are announced before the end of the year to cover the costs stemming from the excessive state presence in the economy.

2. In a document addressed to the government and dated August 1987, the representatives of the Informal Forum of Businessmen stated that "the government should convince itself of the absolute need to restrain its expenditures within the limits of its budget as well as to demonstrate through concrete actions that it will adopt a policy of austerity."

It is essential to work in this manner, in accordance with Brazilian reality. If this is not done the government will demonstrate a lack of political will to assume its share of the sacrifice it demands from the rest of society, which is paying a fantastic cost for the waste, inefficiency, and lack of control of the government. Therefore, the public deficit must not be reduced only by imposing new obligations on the private sector, but by reorganizing the public sector.

The government must also adopt measures that will reduce the size of the government machinery, implement an administrative reform that will increase public sector productivity, review current programs whose cost-profit ratios are unsatisfactory, and privatize state companies and close down unproductive organizations. This will contribute not only to reducing the public deficit but to raising funds for the national treasury.

This reorganization is essential to increase the possibility of economic growth with the strengthening of the private sector.

The government's permanent interference in the price mechanisms clashes with the principles of a market economy, thus disorganizing it. The policy of correcting market distortions through further interventions maintains this harmful vicious circle in which we have been living for years, and aggravates the problems and delays their solutions.

What is needed is stability in order to allow the free market to recover its credibility. Without this guarantee, investments will certainly be delayed, if not suspended.

3. The measures recently announced represent government aggression against society, since they will be imposed through a decree-law, a much condemned mechanism in the past.

Businessmen are not, and should not, be opposed to the payment of taxes; they merely want to point out that any change in the rules of the game must be clear and open in order to allow society to know what it is paying for.

The businessmen also wish to point out that the National Constituent Assembly is still discussing a new tax policy that really deserves the support of the people because it is being carried out by the people's delegates, that is, the Constituent Assembly members who were elected in November 1986. The government may ask the people to make sacrifices but only when it sets an example which, so far, Brazilian society has not observed among its governors.

Signed: Mario Amato, from the Sao Paulo State Federation of Industries; Abram Szajman, from the Sao Paulo State Commerce Federation; Flavio Telles de Menezes, from the Brazilian Rural Society; Romeu Trussardi Filho, from the Sao Paulo Commerce Association; Fabio Salles Meirelles, from the Sao Paulo State Agricultural Federation; Eduardo da Rocha Azevedo, from the Sao Paulo Stock Exchange Market; Paulo de Queiroz, from the Sao Paulo, Parana, Mato Grosso, and Mato Grosso do Sul States Bank Union; Benedicto Dario Ferraz, from the Brazilian South and Center-South Road Transportation Companies Federation.

Correction to Item on Finance Minister

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Columnist on Minister Bresser's 'Anguish'," published in the 11 December Latin America DAILY REPORT, page 24, column one:

Paragraph two, from sentence one, make read ...to explain his position. Bresser reportedly said that if the fiscal package was not accepted, a package he supports, then remaining... (rewording)

Paragraph three, from sentence one, make read ...the PMDB is remaining quiet. The party is shocked due to its recent split within the Constituent Assembly, and it is not paying the appropriate attention to what is happening in the economic sector. Although the party programs support the distribution of revenues, no member of the PMBD has yet supported the tax on assets... (rewording and supplying omitted words)

Same paragraph, from last sentence, make read ...agricultural sector profits. ((new graf)) Even though he decided to quit his government post and return to university life he could not do so because he is still committed to participating in the negotiation... (rewording and supplying omitted words)

Chile

Foreign Minister on Reagan, Shultz Comments

PY180251 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0226 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Santiago, 17 Dec (EFE)—Chilean Foreign Minister Ricardo Garcia tonight said that comments by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz "largely coincide with current Chilean principles, objectives, and reality."

Foreign Minister Garcia said this in response to declarations disseminated by the U.S. Embassy here in which Reagan and Shultz expressed their support for a return to democracy in Chile, and established conditions for the upcoming 1988 presidential plebiscite.

Garcia said that "Chile is effectively getting ready to make a free, secret, and informed decision reflecting the sovereign will of the Chilean people to determine its democratic future."

The foreign minister added that "to this end we have enforced the necessary laws and regulations; proof of this lies in the laws on political parties, the electoral registries, and everything that is currently being done."

As for the U.S. request concerning equal opportunities for access to the media, particularly television, Garcia said that "anyone can see that Chilean political life is becoming increasingly invigorated."

He added that "at this moment, by reading any newspaper or any report, one can see that what Chileans think, say, and write is imbued with the political debate and the analysis of the political alternatives."

Concerning the atmosphere of respect for human rights that the United States has requested, Garcia said: "I think the request has simply echoed what we have said in the past in a categorical and absolute manner."

Asked whether he thinks the U.S. statement constitutes an act of intervention in Chilean domestic affairs, the foreign minister replied: "I would not say it is intervention; I see it as an expression of concern which, according to the facts, has nothing to do with what is happening in Chile."

Fifth Terrorist Arrested in Carreno Case

PY141227 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 0930 GMT 14 Dec 87

[Text] A Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front [FPMR] terrorist, who guarded Lieutenant Colonel Carlos Carreno while in captivity, was arrested a few hours ago by the police.

The man's identity and rank in the FPMR have not been revealed because his arrest is considered extremely important. The police also refused to reveal where he is being held.

The military prosecutor who is investigating Lt Col Carreno's kidnapping has the reports on the different places where the military officer was hidden. He also seems to have information on how Carreno was smuggled out of Chile and taken to Sao Paulo, where he was released after 93 days of captivity.

This terrorist allegedly guarded Carreno at the second hiding place after his abduction on 1 September in front of his home in La Reina neighborhood.

According to unofficial information several other orders for arrests will be issued in the next few hours as a result of this terrorist's arrest.

So far four people have been arrested in the case being investigated by Military Prosecutor Fernando Torres Silva. Their names are Karin Alicia Eitel Villar, 26, language school university student, and unanimously (?declared guilty) by the military court; Juan Carlos and Patricia Cansino Azevedo; and Luis Beltran Catalan.

Karin Eitel is being tried under charges of allegedly planning the kidnapping, alleged illegal association to commit crimes, and forging official documents, since she was carrying several forged identity documents when she was arrested.

Juan Carlos Cansino is accused of having kidnapped Carreno, and his sister Patricia is charged with violating the weapons control law and illegal association to commit crimes.

Regarding Luis Beltran Catalan, Prosecutor Torres said that he entered Chile with Juan Carlos Cansino after attending guerrilla training courses in Cuba.

Intelligence Service Arrests FPMR Terrorists

PY160300 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] The Bio Bio Mayoralty Social Communications Department has released an official report stating that National Intelligence Center [CNI] personnel have detained five members of the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front [FPMR] and seized a great quantity of weapons, ammunition, and explosives that were to be used in terrorist attacks in the region.

The communique states that [word indistinct] terrorists were seized in (Copileno) district, on the way to Cabrero. The terrorists, who were carrying M-16 rifles, a (SHE) submachinegun, and a Browning pistol, were about to blow up electric towers. They were discovered as they were installing eight 200-gram plastic explosive devices.

Later, CNI personnel raided Silvia del Carmen Toro Pino's home in (Boca Sur) district, Concepcion. There they found a large quantity of subversive material, M-16 rifles, ammunition, uniforms, and emblems.

The detained terrorists were: Nelson Alfredo Alarcon Pulido, 21, member of the Communist Party, said to be regional chief of the Concepcion paramilitary group; Javier Fernando Vargas Velazquez, 22, member of the Communist Party, responsible for FPMR regional logistics; Hernan Antonio Jorquera Arriagada, 28, Communist, chief of the armed paramilitary operational group; Edgardo Antonio Rojas Toro, 30, Communist, member of the FPMR operational group; and Silvia del Carmen Toro Pino, 56, Communist, a helper of the armed group.

The official communique adds that the following weapons and materiel were seized: six M-16 automatic rifles—five of them with their numbers scraped off; one 9-mm (SHE) submachinegun; one Italian grenade launcher without a brand name; magazines for M-16 rifles and (SHE) submachineguns; 1.6 kg of C-4 plastic explosive; nine fuses; 60 meters of detonating cord; 100 meters of slow fuse; a great quantity of 5.56-mm and 9-mm ammunition; two military helmets; uniforms and emblems; camping gear; and plans for future attacks.

The five detainees are being held at the Investigative Police headquarters and will be placed at the disposal of the Concepcion Second Military Court [words indistinct].

CNI personnel continue to investigate the case to determine what attacks have already been perpetrated by this group in Concepcion and their connection with similar groups in other cities in the Eighth Region.

Briefs

Production, Sales Figures

The National Institute of Statistics [INE] has reported that industrial production and sales have increased 4.3 and 5.7 percent, respectively, in the first 10 months of 1987 as compared to the period January-October 1986. [Excerpt] *[Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 11 Dec 87 PY]*

Peru

Garcia Explains Currency Devaluation Policy

PA171710 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1800 GMT 16 Dec 87

[Text] The [inti devaluation] currency exchange measure that increases the price of the dollar will foster economic growth in the country within the next few months and will not affect the masses. President Alan Garcia said this upon leaving the ceremonies held at the Naval School.

The president rhetorically asked why the price of the dollar increased, responding: First, to export more. With a low-priced dollar, the industrialists involved in exporting received few intis for each dollar paid abroad and were unable to increase production and provide more jobs. When exports drop, the amount of dollars entering the country drops.

Second, the price in dollars for purchasing machinery or capital goods has been increased for the following reasons: When Peru's consumption and production grew, the industrialists' profits grew, because they sold their products at a higher price in intis. However, because dollars were cheap, the great profits they accrued allowed them to buy many more machines, so much so that in 1987, machines were bought that are not yet in operation even today. They found a way of saving by taking advantage of the cheap dollar. In 1987, $500 million worth of machinery was imported; in 1986, $600 million; and in 1987, $900 million—yet these machines are not put into service right away. According to the government, this should be controlled, and one of the ways of doing this is to increase the price of the dollar for imported machinery.

Third, devaluation is bad for the people when it affects their essential goods, such as food and medicine. In this case, what has been decisively increased is the price of the dollar for imported machinery and household electrical goods, but the price of the dollar for imported corn, wheat, oil, medicine, and meat has increased only slightly.

In conclusion, if the price of the dollar is kept too low, exports would drop, the country would not receive dollars, and many would lose their jobs. If the dollar is kept low, we would all prefer to buy things abroad and stop domestic production.

According to the president, the increase in the price of the dollar for certain products is intended to make foreign goods expensive and encourage domestic consumption.

San Martin Department Placed Under Curfew

PA171347 Lima Panamericana Television Network in Spanish 1232 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] A curfew is imposed throughout San Martin Department to counter the wave of violence affecting that region. The announcement was made by the department's military-political command and becomes effective today.

State of Emergency Extended in Callao, Lima

PA172000 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1800 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] The state of emergency in Lima and Callao has been extended for an additional 30 days. The government says that the decision follows continued acts of violence in the capital, and that the Armed Forces will continue controlling internal order.

Briefs

Supreme Court President Appointed

Juan Mendez Osborn has been appointed new president of the Peruvian Supreme Court, replacing Juan Vicente Ugarte del Pino. Carlos Ernesto Giusti Acuna was appointed president of the Lima Superior Court, and Victor Manuel Portilla Alva president of the Callao Superior Court. [Summary] *[Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 4 Dec 87 p A-1 PY]*

Uruguay

Peres Denounces Anti-Semitism in Argentina

PY172311 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1640 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Montevideo, 17 Dec (EFE)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, who ends an official 2-day visit to Uruguay today, denounced the existence of an "anti-Semitic outbreak" in Argentina.

According to an interview published today by the Argentine [as received] progovernment daily EL DIA, Peres said he regretted the [anti-semitic] incidents and the fact they are linked to "fascist organizations."

Peres said his country "hopes President Raul Alfonsin's government will take the necessary measures to stop this outbreak, which brings back sad memories of the holocaust."

During the interview, the Israeli minister discussed the efforts made by Latin American countries, stating that one can appreciate the efforts made to democratize the political processes, consolidate their economies, and strengthen international relations.

Sees Changes in Soviet Attitude

PY180119 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0023 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Montevideo, 18 Dec (EFE)—Israeli Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said here today there have been "changes" in the Soviet attitude toward the Jewish residents in the USSR, bilateral relations, and the Near East problem. Even though such changes are not really deep, "we can say, nonetheless, there has been some progress," Peres said during a news conference.

After meeting with Uruguayan officials, Peres—who will end an official 2-day visit to Uruguay today—talked to reporters about Israeli problems, diplomatic relations, and the recent "Group of 8" meeting in Acapulco (Mexico). Peres also justified the use of torture for questioning prisoners in the antiterrorist struggle.

Peres said "for the first time a Soviet leader [Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze] invited the Jewish community to visit the USSR." This event occurred during Shevardnadze's visit to Uruguay in October.

Peres pointed out "never before has there been a gesture like the one made by (Eduard) Shevardnadze," the Soviet foreign minister, who during a visit to Uruguay on 5 October broke the rules of protocol and spoke with a

group of Jews demonstrating in front of the Soviet Embassy in Montevideo, demanding freedom for their fellow countrymen in the USSR.

"The USSR is not an enemy of Israel. What we criticize is that the USSR gives many negative answers and few positive replies." Peres said.

On analyzing his last meeting with his Soviet counterpart, he said—through an interpreter, as he was speaking in Hebrew—"I found that Shevardnadze reflected changes at three different levels."

Regarding the three changes, Peres said "the first one deals with the attitude toward the Jewish people living in the USSR, the second with Soviet-Israeli relations, and the third with the Near East problem."

"I have seen changes at those three levels. We can say there has been some progress, but we are still far from a final accord," he said.

This afternoon, Peres will leave Uruguay, where he arrived from Brazil on Tuesday.

Guyana

Socialist International Supports Reforms

FL171951 Bridgetown CANA in English 1704 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 17, CANA—A recent meeting of the Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean has appealed to the authorities in Guyana to heed the voice of the democratic parties of the opposition for democratic reforms of electoral laws and institutions in the country.

According to co-leader of the opposition Working Peoples Alliance (WPA) in Guyana, Eusi Kwayana, who led a WPA delegation to the December 8 and 9 meeting in Caracas, Venezuela, in the face of the urgent and compulsive situation in Haiti, Chile and El Salvador, the committee's support, which forms part of the meetings final declaration, is evidence of deep solidarity with the Guyanese people.

In a statement at a news conference here, Kwayana said the WPA delegation told participants at the meeting that both the freedom of the Guyanese people to choose a government in genuine elections and their freedom of association were seriously restricted.

The delegation contended further that with no mercenaries in Guyana, no guerrilla warfare, the conditions are extremely favourable for negotiations between the Guyana Government, and opposition and other institutions in the country.

The patriotic Coalition for Democracy (PCD) formed by five opposition political parties following the December 1985 general elections here, Kwayana noted, has been advocating that the People's National Congress (PNC) government meet with the PCD for negotiations on the question of electoral reform but that the government has not responded to the PCD's requests.

Suriname

Lachmon Sworn In as Assembly Chairman

PM171407 Rotterdam NRC HANDELSBLAD in Dutch 11 Dec 87 p 2

["Own correspondent" report: "Lachmon Chairman of Surinamese Assembly"]

[Text] Paramaribo, 11 Dec—Surinamese Army leader Bouterse yesterday promised the full support of the military authorities for the country's parliamentary assembly at the swearing-in of Mr Jaggernath Lachmon as the oldest elected member of the National Assembly.

Lachmon, the leader of the Progressive Reform Party and one of the most important politicians in the old parties' Front for Democracy and Development, is now the interim chairman of the Assembly. Under Lachmon's leadership a new president of the Republic of Suriname must be elected.

Acting President Ramdat-Misier and two Hindu priests swore in Lachmon as chairman. Misier said that now more than ever the country needs people like Lachmon who from their broad spiritual vision are able to arrive at the right combination of the rational and intellectual in their assessment of situations and in supporting and taking decisions.

Holds Talks on Candidates

FL171743 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Chairman of the National Assembly, Jaggernath Lachmon, has requested the government to hand over the draft law that regulates the election of the president by the assembly. Today, Lachmon held talks with the two other front leaders about presidential candidates. If the parties reach an agreement on this, [word indistinct] talks could be held with the presidential candidates about the ministers who will be included in the new Cabinet.

Wijdenbosch Withdraws From National Assembly

FL171959 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] The National Democratic Party [NDP] representative in the National Assembly, Jules Wijdenbosch, yesterday withdrew from the body. In consultation with the party's leadership, Wijdenbosch decided to serve the nation elsewhere but this has not been made known. The NDP seat will probably go to (Fran Pleiser), who has already participated in the National Assembly as the representative of the 25th of February Movement.

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